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Original Article

Political Satire and Public Disillusionment in Nepali Vehicle Discourse

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Abstract

This paper examines political satire and the public's disillusionment with politics in Nepal through the analysis of vehicle discourses written and displayed on public vehicles and how power relations and resistance are negotiated. Based on Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), and supplemented by satire theory, and Foucault's concept of power and resistance, the study examines how vehicle discourses act as a medium of political commentary and social critique. Fifteen vehicle discourses were photographed during field travel in Gandaki, Bagmati and Lumbini provinces between January and May 2026, and only eight vehicle texts were purposively selected for analysis based on their relevance to the theme of the study and political significance. The inscriptions, which were written in Nepali, were first translated into English and then analyzed for rhetorical and discursive features, including irony, metaphor, parody, contrast, and parallelism. The study revealed four major themes: political betrayal and loss of trust, elite hypocrisy and political privilege, economic inequality and migration, and civic frustration as a form of symbolic resistance. The research also suggests that vehicle texts act as an alternative public sphere where common people vent their disillusionment towards the government and hold the dominant political narratives to be false. The study enhances academic understanding by demonstrating how vehicle discourse serves as an everyday, mobile space in which Nepali individuals utilize satire to challenge prevailing political narratives and express public dissatisfaction.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, Everyday resistance, Political satire, Public disillusionment, Vehicle discourse

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Introduction

In Nepal's rapidly changing socio-political environment, public vehicles, mainly buses, trucks, and tempos, have acquired a usage far beyond their primary function as a mode of transport. Essentially, they have turned into moving texts that contain verses slogans, humorous, comments, and artistic expressions of people's feelings and social realities. Such inscriptions are popularly known as *sawari sahitya* (vehicle literature), which literally means the writings on the means of transport. These writings on vehicles make them into mobile places of conversation where even simple people depict their lives, disappointments, hopes, and views (Dewan, 2025; Hasrati et al., 2016). By exhibiting in public areas and circulated through diverse regions, these writings shed light on how people understand and react to various political, economic, and social situations.

Often vehicle literature uses literary and rhetorical figures of speech including satire irony metaphor, hyperbole, and symbolism to carry out communication about issues of daily lives, government corruption, migration, unemployment, and social inequality. Although these writings are considered nothing more than amusing or merely ornamental but they act as a strong medium for public discourse through which the people express their views about politics and societal transformation. They display the rising dissatisfaction with political bodies, broken promises, and the ever-expanding divide between official statements and real-life situations. Through comedy and satire, vehicle writings give voice to problems that could even stay without being expressed in formal public spaces.

Satire as a mode of social and political criticism has been regarded as an important element in both literary and cultural studies. In Nepal, satirical communication is historically evidenced from the literary works of Bhairav Aryal and to the present-day satirical music acts cartoons, and public commentaries. In fact, satire has often been a very effective means of pointing out the hypocrisy behind double standards, making a stand against power misuses, and expressing grievances. Making people laugh with their jokes and mocking reveal the fundamental issues of political and social systems and create opportunities for critique and resistance (Bist & Kandel, 2025, 2026; Kaptan, 2016; Oli & Kandel, 2025;

Petrović, 2018; Zekavat, 2017). So, for vehicle discourse, satire frequently acts as a medium for ordinary people to voice their mistrust in politicians, reveal the corruption of officials, and show their disappointment in the government.

Recent scholarship has increasingly acknowledged the social and political significance of Nepali vehicle literature. Dewan (2025) demonstrates that vehicle inscriptions reveal multiple layers of public sentiment concerning identity, economic hardship, migration, political power, and social inequality. Similarly, Gurung (2025) observes that while a large number of inscriptions align with the propagation of old social values, a fair amount of them also uses funny and satirical language to hold political leaders and governance accountable. A recent study has highlighted the political, ideological, and humorous dimensions of the Nepali vehicle discourse; yet, the question of how political satire is capable of constructing the public's discontent and power relations of negotiation by resistance is unexplored. This study analyses how the citizens use linguistic resources with rhetorical means for expressing politically frustration in public discourse of vehicle inscriptions. The primary purpose of this article is to analyze how political power can be perceived by the public using vehicle discourses. It investigates the sense of irritation revealed through language towards political rulers, and it describes how this frustration can take up the form of public mockery, ridiculing irony, rhetorical questions, metaphors, comparisons, and contrasts in language. The present study addresses this gap by narrowing the scope to political satire as its central theme.

This focus is particularly relevant to Foucault's conception of power and resistance. Power is neither a monolithic entity present only in a handful of political organs nor an object possessed by a certain group of people. (Foucault, 1972, 1980). Rather, it is constantly in motion and flow through daily practices, discursive activities, and social relations. Power is exercised through discourse; whereas resistance is also generated through discourse. From this angle, vehicle inscriptions do not merely function as funny remarks but as discursive strategies that alter the portrayal of politics, governance, and societal order. With satire, irony, and metaphor, these texts offer different avenues for the people to symbolically disobey the official versions and construct alternative discourses. Such manifestations gain more importance in societies where the political institutions are no longer trusted, and where the citizens' dissatisfaction with the government is becoming the main feature of the public mentality.

In the same way, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a suitable methodological structure for identifying how language can be a reflection and reproduction of power relations and ideology (Fairclough, 2013; Wodak & Meyer, 2015). CDA enables the study to examine vehicle discourses carry social meanings, create political identities, and show the hidden ideas of authority, citizenship, and inequality. Thus, the combination of Foucauldian ideas of power and resistance and the study of satire through CDA provides a framework for examining how language ideology humor, and political critique coexist and interact.

Against this backdrop, the present study investigates how political satire in Nepali vehicle discourse reflects public disillusionment and is a form of symbolic resistance. Furthermore, it examines the linguistic and rhetorical strategies through which vehicle inscriptions construct political realities, represent relations of power, and articulate dissatisfaction with governance and social conditions. Building on the understanding of vehicle discourse as cultural and political texts in Nepal, existing scholarship further reveals how such discourse unfolds in everyday public interactions, state regulatory practices, and symbolic expressions like satire. Publicly articulating dissatisfaction is common whenever there are concerns on democratic accountability, governance, and responsiveness of the political institutions (Jacob, 2025; Paller, 2013). In Nepal vehicle inscriptions have emerged as a tool for people to publicly express their concerns and frustrations with a touch of humor, and through everyday language. These aspects are mainly seen in the satirical statements, public fun, and stories of disappointment that the people use to demonstrate how their political culture has been influenced by instability, unfulfilled democratic promises, and unequal power relations. Accordingly, the study has the following objectives:

- To identify the linguistic and rhetorical strategies used in political satire in Nepali vehicle discourse.
- to investigate how these satirical expressions construct and articulate public disillusionment with political power and governance.
- to analyze how vehicle satire negotiates power and resistance relations in everyday public discourse.

And, this research aims to find an answer to the question: How is political satire employed in Nepali vehicle discourse to construct public disillusionment and negotiate relations of power and resistance? By addressing this question, the study contributes to scholarship on discourse, satire, and power while highlighting vehicle literature as an important yet understudied form of everyday political communication in contemporary Nepal. Moreover, it demonstrates how vehicle inscriptions create a transportable and publicly accessible venue in which ordinary persons utilize satire to challenge prevailing political narratives and express dissatisfaction with political institutions.

Literature Review

This paper focuses on the study of critical discourse analysis, power relations, and political satire written and displayed in Nepali public vehicles. Language is not only means of communication but it is the place where ideological struggle, social identities, and power relations are shaped, negotiated, and contested. Through the lens of CDA, and taking Foucault's idea of power and resistance and the studies of satire and political critique, this review examines the theoretical and empirical foundations relevant to understanding political satire and public disillusionment in Nepali vehicle discourse.

Critical Discourse Analysis, Language, and Ideology

Language in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is seen not just as a tool for communication but as social practice producing, maintaining, and challenging power, ideology, and social inequalities (Fairclough, 2013, 2023). CDA investigates how discourse constructs social realities and reflects larger political and cultural systems (Wodak & Meyer, 2015). For Ramanathan and Tan (2015), discourse is both a reflection of and a tool for organizing society as well as social relations, identities, and knowledge systems. So, a text should be regarded not as a mere mirror of reality but as a domain of ideological meanings. In line with this, CDA doesn't limit the notion of power to those institutions that physically exert their will but rather sees power also as something exercised through discourse. Dominant groups exercise their symbolic power when they control public discourse to a point where they can shape people's ways of thinking (Van Dijk, 2013). Similarly, discourse plays a role in legitimating social hierarchies and the power of institutions (Meyer & Wodak, 2001). In particular, for analyzing political communication through which politicians legitimize themselves and influence public opinion.

Everyday public texts, signs, and writings contribute to the lingual landscape in which public identities, as well as political and opposing standpoints, become publicly visible. In this sense, discourse serves both as a medium of expression for the relevant issues and as a space where social and political issues are publicly negotiated. The medium of discourse is not mere decoration but a crucial place where political and cultural issues are articulated through the language that people use daily. From CDA perspectives, vehicle discourses are public texts that reproduce and contest dominant ideologies. Their linguistic elements such as metaphors, slogans, and wit, as well as satire, can be seen as the unveiling of the implicit beliefs about governance citizenship, social inequality, and political accountability. CDA thus provides an effective framework for uncovering the ideological dimensions of vehicle discourse and examining how language becomes a resource for both power and resistance. In the context of Nepali vehicle discourses, the focus changes to how citizens understand power and authority through political discourse and what kind of relationship they build with the power. CDA is the analytical tool here to find out how vehicle discourse becomes the places for political discussion and meaning through language features and rhetorical strategies.

Foucault's Concept of Power and Resistance

Michel Foucault's works brought a new perspective to the understanding of power: it is not only power held by governments or the elite leaders. In fact, Foucault (1972) states that power is everywhere; it depends on the relations, it is productive and it exists in the way we do daily actions, in what we say and write, in the organizations and in the knowledge that we share (Magarati & Bist, 2025). Besides resisting people, power also determines the limits of knowledge, of talking, and of acting in society. So, discourse is the main tool of power circulation. (Foucault, 1980) also notes that power and knowledge are inseparable because knowledge systems contribute to the production and maintenance of power relations. In fact, whatever is recognized as truth by societies is often tied to dominant discursive formations that govern social behavior and validate specific forms of authority. As a result, discourse is one of the main stages where power is exercised and contested. Still, a significant part of Foucault's thinking comprises the notion that power relations include resistance too. Barbalet (1985) stated power and resistance are two sides of the same coin. Resistance can take many forms as unofficial, informal, and unorganized actions and reactions. Resistance encompasses a set of practices, activities, and utterances that people seek to undermine the established or official orders without challenging it (Howard et al., 2003; Scott, 1985, 1990). The notion of unofficial resistance is useful in understanding the phenomenon of satire since satirical texts and speeches can be seen as an example of such resistance. Indeed, by depicting the oppressed or subordinate group in the authoritative or ruling position, satire makes this group speak from the dominant or official point of view, giving a voice and allowing to criticize the authorities (Danaher et al., 2000; Mills & Denison, 2014; Weems, 2005).

Research has pointed out that humor, public commentary, and informal textually oriented practices can act as clandestine, subtle modes of resistance to political power without being confrontational or openly hostile (Feldman, 2024; Lilja & Vinthagen, 2018; Oli & Kandel, 2025). Vehicle inscriptions in Nepal, for instance, can be taken as a perfect example of such resistance, as people, through them get an opportunity to express their discontent, question political leaders, and uncover the inconsistencies of official narratives. From the Foucauldian standpoint, these inscriptions function as discursive sites where ordinary people discuss their power relations and offer their alternative interpretations of political realities. The present study considers Nepali vehicle humor as a spatial practice of everyday life where ordinary citizens use language to negotiate political power and articulate dissatisfaction.

Satire, Irony, and Political Critique

Satire has been seen as a powerful instrument for sociopolitical critique. Traditionally, humour, irony exaggeration, parody, and ridicule are used to expose human foolishness, social injustice, and the misuse of power through making people laugh or attracting their attention in other ways (Abrams, 2018). Satire usually goes roundabout and humorous way making a contradiction or incongruity the object of the criticism instead of giving a straightforward political statement.

Irony is in the center that enables the existence of satire. Hutcheon (1994) deems irony as a form of double architecture of meaning, the frame of what you say literally, and the real meaning. Irony asks the audiences to get at the hidden rather than the explicitly stated message. Such indirectness also gives speaker or writer the chance to get a critical message across under the cover of ambiguity (Ruggiero, 2024). Besides, he further notes that irony opens the door to a sort

of challenge without being very explicit, through humor and insinuation. Satire apart from being amusing, has a very useful social function and it enables the public to look at things politically in a new way and become players in democratic life (Gray et al., 2009). Zekavat (2017) notes that in doing so it can reveal ideological contradictions and question the legitimacy of the power holders. Besides, researches (Botha, 2014; Shao & Liu, 2019) believed that through political satire people let out their grievances against the government and other institutions. Research on humor and politics suggest that satirical communication becomes most visible during times of social upheaval and political cynicism (Feldman, 2024; Holm, 2018). Similarly, satire allows people to defy power and voice their indignation even if they are not able to do it directly. Satire in this case is not only humor or fun; it is a form of symbolic defiance and the public's way of making a commentary on the issues.

Scholars argue that decorated vehicles in Pakistani truck art are moving cultural texts that express cultural identity, social values, and everyday meanings (Kazmi, 2021). A similar trend has been observed in political graffiti, where public writings can be politically expressive and resistive activities, transforming the space into places for challenging power and expressing alternatives (Baldini, 2023; Seloni & Sarfati, 2017; Waldner & Dobratz, 2013). With these works, the study gains a broader framework for interpreting Nepali vehicle discourses as itinerant and openly available forms of political conversation, rather than just ornamental scripts.

In Nepal, research on vehicle discourse remains comparatively limited. The vehicle discourse, satire and irony mainly take the form of light-hearted slogans, figurative language, and sharp remarks aimed at politicians, government, and social issues. The existing studies confirm that humour can be used as a means of political communication and criticism. Research on the use of humour in protests proved that mockery, satire, irony, and other forms of humorous discourse can undermine authorities and reveal various political issues (Görkem, 2015; Scott, 1985, 1990). Similarly, the Nepali a vehicle discourse analysis revealed that humour and satire can be used to express hidden public concerns (Dewan, 2025). The present study approaches political humour in vehicle discourse to reveal the public's criticism towards political and economic problems, including corruption, instability, and unrealistic expectations. It investigates how such discourse may articulate dissatisfaction with economic hardship, corruption, political instability, and unmet public expectations, and how these expressions may contribute to the construction of public disillusionment.

Methodology

This qualitative study investigates political satire in Nepali public vehicle discourse using purposive sampling, visual documentation, and critical discourse analysis.

Research Design

Through the qualitative approach, this paper investigates how political satire in Nepali vehicle discourse mirrors public dissatisfaction and serves as an act of resistance. The study uses a text-oriented approach to Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), supplemented by satire theory, and Foucault's concept of power and resistance for understanding the relation between language, ideology, and political critique. Since the dataset only contains photo inscriptions, the paper uses Fairclough primarily at the textual level and focuses on how lexical choices metaphor, irony, parody, evaluation, modality, and rhetorical questioning produce political messages.

Research Setting and Data Collection

Data were collected from public vehicles such as buses, trucks, and tempos in Nepal. The texts were collected through direct observation during the researcher's travel on the way to Nawalparasi to Pokhara of Gandaki Province, Nawalparasi to Kathmandu of Bagmati Province and Nawalparasi to Butwal of Lumbini province specifically in between January and May 2026 and were photographed using a Redmi Note 9 mobile phone. Fifteen vehicle inscriptions were photographed; however, eight were purposefully chosen for further research because they represented the study's focus on political satire, disillusionment, and the interplay of power and resistance. The remaining seven inscriptions were removed from the analysis because they did not reflect the study's focus. Photographs were only taken of publicly displayed texts, and identifying information irrelevant to the research objectives were removed from the analysis record. These images show explicit or implicit political messages through short slogans, statements, and satirical remarks. Most of the inscriptions on vehicles were in Nepali. For analysis, the texts were initially transcribed and then translated. The researcher, a bilingual of Nepali and English, translated the first English versions, focusing on cultural references, humor, sarcasm, idioms, and political allusions. For each item, the original Nepali text, Romanized transliteration, and English translation were all preserved. To ensure the translation's credibility, a second bilingual Nepali, English reader independently evaluated the phrasing, implicit meanings, and satirical force against the source texts.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling was applied to select fifteen cases of vehicle discourse from an initial photographic corpus of twenty-five items. Based on following criteria the discourses were selected: (a) it directly mentioned political leaders, parties, elections, government institutions, public policies, or governance; (b) it indirectly criticized political authority through satire irony parody, metaphor, or rhetorical questioning; or (c) it showed public dissatisfaction with corruption, political

instability, broken promises, poor public services, or other aspects of governance. Duplicate, illegible, simply commercial, religious, personal, or non-political cases were left out. The final fifteen-item corpus was chosen because each case showed a clear connection between its verbal elements and a political issue, authority, or public grievance. While fifteen examples made up the whole analytical corpus, only eight are extensively discussed in the Findings section because they very clearly show the main themes of the study.

Analytical Framework

This study focuses on the textual component of Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis to determine how language and rhetorical strategies in Nepali vehicle discourse led to political and social judgments. In addition to highlighting dissatisfaction, authority, and opposition in the text, it acknowledges the opinions of the text's creators and readers as being outside the scope of the current work. This study uses Fairclough (1995) textual level of Critical Discourse Analysis, which is supplemented with satire theory and Foucauldian conceptions of power and resistance, to investigate how vehicle discourse in Nepal conveys political discontent and challenges conventional meanings.

Data Analysis

The analysis was reflective of the researcher's linguistic, cultural, and political viewpoints. The study examines satire and resistance; there was a risk of reading every humorous or critical expression as politically oppositional. The research distinguished between humorous pieces that merely entertained from those that used humor as a tool to question authority, reveal contradictions, express dissatisfaction, or defy dominant representations. The investigator made reflexive comments and documented different interpretations during the coding stage, e.g., when a text viewed as a joke, personal expression, or political commentary. Interpretive statements were admitted only if they were corroborated by the text's wording, context, and rhetorical features. The retention of the entire corpus, multilingual translation verification, multiple comparisons with original photos, meticulous coding, and reflexive memoing contributed to increased trustworthiness.

Findings

This paper explores the use of political satire in the discourse of Nepali vehicles, revealing how the public express their dissatisfaction and how they challenge and negotiate the power and resistance relations through satire. By applying CDA and satire theory, as well as the Foucault's power and resistance, the selected vehicle inscriptions reflect the themes of political treason, the hypocrite elite, economic stratification, migration and displacement, and public dissatisfaction most frequently. Taking the rhetorical devices of irony metaphor contrast, parody and parallelism, the mobile texts are presented as alternative discourse spaces for the citizens to voice out against the dominant discourses.

Political Betrayal and the Crisis of Trust

The vehicle inscriptions reveal deep feeling of betrayal and diminishing trust not only between individuals but also in institutions. Instead of showing power as something that guards or represents, these writings depict it as greedy, lying, and indifferent to the problems of the common people. In a way of sarcasm, irony, and symbolism, the inscriptions reveal the sorrows of life, the disillusionment that followed, and the let-down of those who were given the charge of social and political duties.

मलाई कापी-कलममै मेरो दाजुभाइले गोली हाने, आमा।

Mother, I was shot by my own brother right on my notebook and pen.

The phrase metaphorically and editorially dramatizes the betrayal within the closest one's own community. To be "shot" in the act of holding a notebook and pen is an allegory of denial of education, sidelining one's growth opportunities, and the thwarting of individual ambitions by those who ought to be one's supporters. Instead of actual physical harm, the inscription is a portrayal of emotional, social, and institutional betrayal. From a Foucauldian angle, the piece of text indicates that the power is exercised through everyday social relations and not just through state institutions. The speaker's affliction results from members of his/her social network who are ironically the most trusted ones.

भगवान् मलाई मित्रदेखि बचाइदिनु, शत्रुको सामना आफैँ गर्नेछु।

God! save me from my friends; I will confront my enemies alone.

This twist is a humorous play on the expectations we usually have about them. Friends are normally the ones who we feel, trust, and, we believe to protect us. They are the ones who might hurt us. This is a way of showing that sometimes friends are the ones with evil intentions, even flicking us. It is a kind of symbol that shows what a lot of people think about politicians who pretend to be the people's representatives but are only interested in their own goals. The text using irony creates a feeling of disenchantment with politics and to question the usual stories of loyalty and representation.

The mistrust expressed in these writings support the research on local political language, where regular individuals are displaying their doubts about political authorities through their everyday communicative methods. However, the political statement in the form of newspaper articles or social media is quite different from the ones through vehicle texts that have put criticism in everyday mobility and popular humor. So, public vehicles are not only the means of transportation

but also carriers of an alternative political message. This is in line with research finding that political humour is a way of ridiculing the authority, criticizing and generating new interpretations of political situations (Görkem, 2015; Scott, 1990). In the present study, however, the relevant evidence concerns Nepali vehicle discourse, where feelings of betrayal and distrust are articulated through humorous expressions that question politicians' authority.

Satirizing Elite Hypocrisy and Political Privilege

The vehicle inscriptions rely on satire, irony, and contrast to expose the hypocrisy of political elites besides the unjust distribution of power and privileges. These texts highlight the divide between the pledges, lifestyles, and interests of the leaders and citizens' everyday struggles. The inscriptions, rich in biting humor and sharp criticism, urge the elites to relinquish their control and question whether political and social inequalities are really justified.

करोड-लाखअन्दा कुरा नहुने, तर चिया-चुरोटको पैसा कसले लिँछे थाहै नहुने।

Conversation is about billions and millions but they don't know who pay for the tea and cigarettes.

It is a striking image that dramatically highlights the political-economic elite's detachment from the daily struggles of the common citizen by contrasting their talk about huge amounts of money and their ignorance of basic expenses. Moreover, the following excerpt contains an even more direct political criticism:

कलम रोय, अक्षर बन्छ; कवि रोय, कविता; नेता मरे, श्रद्धाञ्जली; जनता मरे, रमिता।

A pen cries; letters come; a poet cries; poems come; a leader dies; tribute; a people die; merriment.

The text uses contrast and parallelism to show how the social worth of different lives is not as equal as we might think. The last contrast between political figures and the public is mostly important. In fact, leaders are given honor and are publicly mourned, while the death of the common people turns to be a public entertainment. The text through satire is complaining about the political systems that give priority to the interests of the elites rather than the welfare of the public. Looking at it from CDA, the text is unveiling some of the ideological assumptions that are a part of the discourse when it comes to valuing the lives of some and the invisibility of the suffering of others.

The recurring contrast between elite privilege and ordinary hardship supports broader scholarship on political satire as a mechanism for exposing social and political contradictions (Corsbie-Massay et al., 2025). But the vehicle inscriptions analyzed in this paper diverge from the conventional forms of satire, which are typically the work of skilled satirists or media groups, as these inscriptions come from the unidentifiable voices of the public. The circulation of these writings demonstrates the decentralized nature of public political expression, as political messages are disseminated without the involvement of party, government, or media agencies. This does not imply that the messages demonstrate collective resistance; rather, it suggests vehicle discourses function as mobile and publicly accessible places for the circulation of potentially competing ideas.

Economic Inequality, Migration, and Social Dislocation

Economic inequality, unemployment, and migration of workers represent the main issues that come up again and again in the inscriptions on the selected vehicles. These writings mirror a society where chances for economic advancement are usually scarce, that means a lot of people have to go abroad for work even though it means separating from their families and experiencing emotional pain. With the use of satire, irony, and references to culture, these inscriptions depict migration not only as an economic necessity but also as a reason for social dislocation, broken relationships, and a general state of irritation with the current socio-economic environment.

ल्यायो स्वास्नी, खायो भोज; गयो विदेश, अर्कैले मोज।

Brought a wife, had a feast; went abroad, someone else (kissed) enjoyed her.

The line may seem funny at first glance, but actually it conveys the worries that labor migration brings to a family. The rhyme and irony in the text make a family separation and social insecurity piece through economic necessity, a family may be broken up. The point of labor migration is not a freewill but due to circumstances outside the person's control, limited opportunities at home. Moreover, the reality and compulsion are expressed in this line:

माया सानो भएको भए मुना किन रुन्थी, धन सानो भएको भए मदन घरमै हुन्थे।

If love was minor, why would Muna cry? If wealth was minor, Madan would have stayed home.

Referencing Muna Madan (Devkota, 1936) is not just a literary decoration. Devkota's epic tells of Madan leaving for Lhasa in search of a better life and brings to light migration's impact on intimate and family bonds. The vehicle discourse shifts this older story to the setting of today's labour migration to the Gulf. As a result, it establishes a literary dialogue between two different migration scenarios: Madan's historical trek to Lhasa, and the present movement of Nepali workers to Gulf countries. The implication is that even though the destinations and economic systems have changed, the main problems of livelihood, separation, sacrifice, and uncertain return are still there. The words are double meanings that provide deeper insight and through literature the object of the study examines these characters to shed light on their situation. The text shows that through only material or economic needs, people are driven away from their homeland irrespective of the love of their hearts, family. At the same time, the inscriptions remind us that harsh economic situations

not only keep migrating but also cause emotional pain and sufferings. Besides these, inscriptions made of vehicles through literary reference and opposing feature create a literary critique of the socio-economic causes that forced people to move and the resulting emotional pain.

The inscription has the power to communicate the complexity of economic inequality and its impact on not only material deprivation but disruption of personal relationships and social belonging, that is why, they have created a new view by showing economic divide through loss and emotional displacement and migration. At the same time, the dazzling cover of cultural narratives and everyday language can make the communication of structural issues by way of satire.

Civic Frustration and Discourses of Resistance

Some vehicle inscriptions criticize political actors and institutions, while others use indirect satire, irony, and reflective social commentary to express a civic frustration. These texts indicate a rising feeling of displeasure with continuing social and political issues and promote critical awareness and self-reflection. Instead of proposing direct confrontation, they use ordinary language and humor to enquire dominant narratives, challenge established norms, and give voice to the delicate forms of resistance to the current power structures.

अस्को विरोध मात्र होइन, ब्रो-आफू बदलिनुहोस्, देश आफैं बदलिन्छ।

Bro, it's not just about opposing other— change yourself and the country changes itself.

This inscription changes the responsibility from the state to the individual and it does not directly mock political authorities. Its focus on personal responsibility is understood as a suggestion that suffering is someone's failure, lack of effort, or bad choices and due to the political and economic situations. It is consequently treated as a negative case in the analysis. Apart from being a symbol of resistance, the inscription shows reinforcements of dominant values of self-reliance and personal responsibility. Its presence exemplifies that vehicle discourse is ideologically diverse: the same public medium can contain oppositional criticism as well as messages that normalize or reinforce existing power relations. Similarly, the paradox can be seen:

स्वर्ग जान चाहन्छन्, तर मर्न कोही चाहँदैनन्।

Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die.

It ridicules the human characteristic of craving for things that are difficult, or even impossible, to acquire. From political perspective, it can be interpreted as an indictment of not only the citizens but also the government leaders who desire changes in society but are not willing to make the necessary sacrifices. The paradox acts as a kind of social criticism, pointing out how people's actions hardly correspond to their stated goals.

Foucault believes that the literary pieces are example of resistance. By using humor, irony, and indirect criticism, they question prevailing ideas instead of making a direct attack on political power. Using public transit, their presence enables these re-expressed opinions to be visible and audible in locations other than the typical institutional settings; a normal vehicle is turned into a moving assembly of public talk. These writings do not directly face power but rather reach criticism through humor, allegory, and sarcasm.

Resistance is scattered local and embedded in ordinary discourse (Foucault, 1972, 1980). The vehicle discourses show that resistance can manifest not only through organized political activism but also through ordinary communication processes that question dominant assumptions and reveal contradictions in public life. This is why vehicle discourse is a small-scale political space where alternative meanings are regularly created and circulated.

Discussion

The findings suggest that political satire in Nepali vehicle discourse provides a visible form of everyday political communication through which citizens express dissatisfaction, re-negotiate power, relations and express new interpretations of the social world. Instead of considering these inscriptions as proof of political resistance, common people construct political ideas through every day speeches and writings. The use of joke, sarcasm, metaphor, paradox, and parody lets people to express political concerns indirectly about leadership, responsibility, inequality, and frustrated expectations. The present research adds to the general idea that satire is an important tool for public criticism due to societal constraints or limits of formal institutions, people may not be able to be engage in political discussion directly (Billig, 2005; Jones, 2010).

The central theme is political betrayal and falling faith that represent public dissatisfaction with public leaders with boarder issues as representation, accountability, and social relations. This finding is consistent with the research on political commitments and citizens' lived realities (della Porta, 2010; Norris, 2022). However, the current corpus does not indicate the prevalence of political distrust among Nepalese citizens; rather, it demonstrates how distrust is linguistically and rhetorically conveyed in a small sample of publicly accessible texts. The analyzed vehicle messages in this paper point to a feeling of betrayal which is depicted as a constant element of both the private and political spheres. Such representations indicate that trust has become a contested social value, frequently questioned through humor and symbolic critique.

The findings also show how satire exposes contradiction between official political representations and everyday experiences. By contrasting stories of the common people with privileged ones, the inscriptions question the dominant ideologies that justify unequal distributions of power and privilege. This supports with Simpson (2003) who sees satire as a tool to unseat official accounts and expose the contradictions in the ideology. From a CDA point of view, the opposing statements reveal not simply truthful statements of the real situation; instead, they result from a certain mode of expression, which makes judgments and presents a certain side of the issue. So, the texts not only reproduce feelings of discontent but they also introduce different ways of interpreting power justice responsibility and citizenship. Instead of presenting straightforward political plans, satirical discourse aims at enabling audiences to identify contradictions and to challenge the traditional views. In this way, vehicle discourse plays democratic role through highlighting the so-called moments of reflection and doubt-making.

Economic inequality and migration pointed out economic strategy and an experience involving separation, uncertainty, and emotional cost. The migration-related inscriptions represent how people feel the economic hardships in multiple ways other than the monetary aspect, like the emotional pain and the uncertainties of becoming part of a new society. This finding corresponds with research showing that moving economically is equally accompanied by complicated affective and cultural ramifications that are beyond just the labor markets and remittance economies (Delgado Wise, 2023; Kandel, 2026; Nedelcu et al., 2024; Sugden et al., 2022). The paper demonstrates how lived experiences of individuals presented as public narratives using short culturally appropriate texts where personal sufferings are reframed as social commentaries. That means, political satire in the collection often serves as an indirect means of critique: governance is criticized through the portrayal of economic uncertainties, migration, and social life at the micro level.

The research further supports Foucauldian conceptions of power and resistance. Instead of showing power as a singular force controlled only by politics, power is understood as something that is exercised through everyday social relations, public discourse, and systems of meaning. Similarly, they show that resistance is produced through simple communicative acts. Resistance as a widespread and continuous process, is part of everyday life rather than an isolated political event (Lilja & Vinthagen, Kandel, 2026; 2018; Mills & Denison, 2014). The vehicle discourses are interpreted as sites of discursive resistance since they show an already existing powerful and dominant view under question, and put forward the users' evaluations of the political situation. However, the study does not involve interviews with inscription creators or viewers, it is unable to determine the objectives of these texts or their impact on readers.

From CDA perspectives, the findings confirm the idea that language not only reflect reality but also process of constructing meanings around social and political issues (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010). Through the use of certain words and speech patterns, the writings depict different ways of showing what political actors, public people and being socially responsible mean. The use of certain language and speech patterns illustrate particular representations of political actors, authority, citizenship, and social responsibility. Their mobility and public exposure may extend the circulation of these meanings outside fixed institutional venues. So, this should not be confused with demonstrated audience reception or the formation of an alternative public sphere.

Another significant element of the present research is its emphasis on vehicle literature as an overlooked form of public discourse. At present research mainly targets online platforms, social media, and mass political communication, the current results show that vehicle discourses remain a prominent form of civic expression. Vehicle discourses circulate through different social and geographical spheres allowing political commentary to be heard by the public beyond the traditional media channels. Their mobility, visibility, and availability are factors that make them the outstanding means of public opinion and cultural resistance.

The analysis indicates that political satire in the Nepali vehicle discourses works at the convergence of humour, ideology, and potential everyday resistance. Still, this reading must not be the basis for generalizing all Nepali vehicle discourses, as it is mainly dependent on a small purposive corpus and a focus mainly on the textual dimension of the selected instances. Through the inscriptions, ordinary people find avenues not only to vent their anger but also to make sense of social realities and challenge the prevailing power using creative linguistic work. That is why vehicle literature is more than just a piece of pop culture; it is a significant type of everyday political discourse which portrays wider social tensions and hopes.

Conclusions and Implications

The study further demonstrates that vehicle discourse serves as a significant site of symbolic resistance. Rather than directly confronting authority, the inscriptions challenge dominant narratives through humor and creative language, creating alternative spaces for political commentary and public reflection. In this regard, vehicle literature exemplifies how resistance can emerge within ordinary communicative practices and circulate through every day public spaces. Besides that, this study also adds a new perspective to discourse and political communication scholars by pointing out mobile public texts as a primary source of social knowledge. The inscriptions not only express the author's thoughts but also reveal collective concerns and desires about different issues such as governance, migration, economic hardship, and social justice. They represent aspects of public opinion that is rarely found in official political discourse. Overall, the paper argues that Nepali vehicle discourse is an evolving form of everyday politics where the use of satire is a way of power negotiation, expressing disappointment, and envisioning different social scenarios.

The future research should investigate drivers, passengers, vehicle owners, painters, and other road users perceive and react to the political discourse on vehicles. This research will shed light on readers to take as jokes, political criticisms, social commentaries, or acts of resistance. Additional research might increase the dataset by including various provinces, districts, transport modalities, and travel routes to explore regional and social differences. Researchers may also study vehicle discourse alongside political satire in digital media to see how the same complaints and rhetorical devices are shared via mobile, public, and online platforms.

The findings have implications for understanding political communication, the public's participation in discourses, and daily forms of resistance in Nepal. Political satire is exclusively used to criticize political discourse by institutions, digital platforms, and visual forms of communication. These satirical comments in vehicle discourse demonstrate that public disenchantment is more than a passive reaction to political dissatisfaction; it has evolved into a discursive practice in which citizens critically examine political leadership, governance, corruption, and the failure to meet public expectations. Political satire provides citizens with an indirect but publicly accessible means of negotiating power and voicing discontent. So, the study contributes to discourse-oriented methods to political communication by demonstrating how laughter, irony, and mocking can be employed as tools for challenging prevailing political narratives. The consequences are far-reaching that examining daily communication practices can help us comprehend a shifting connection between Nepali individuals and political institutions, particularly when people express their suspicion through creative and informal forms of political commentary.

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